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Carson Commends Youth Volunteer Award Recipient

McAlester Youth Honored for Community Service

For Immediate Release
05 February 2004

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Washington, D.C. -- Congressman Brad Carson (D-OK) announced today that Julia Wynn, 11, of McAlester was named one of Oklahoma's top two youth volunteers for 2004 by the Prudential Spirit of Community Awards. This award program, currently in its ninth year, honors young people for outstanding acts of volunteerism, and is conducted by Prudential Financial in partnership with the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP).

"I am extremely proud of the hard work, creativity and dedication exhibited by Julia," Congressman Carson said. "It is inspiring to see the hard work and initiative Julia and other young volunteers devote to helping Oklahomans in need. I am pleased to hear that programs such as the Prudential Spirit of Community Awards take the time to recognize Oklahoma's outstanding youth for their efforts."

Julia, a sixth-grader at Will Rogers Elementary School in McAlester, was chosen by a panel of state-level judges for her "Lemonade: Thirst Aid for First Aid" project that raised over \$4,000 for the American Red Cross last August. In organizing this event, Julia worked with her local Red Cross chapter, recruited over 91 volunteers, obtained sponsors, sought publicity and addressed other civic organizations. After the one-day event, Julia's project raised enough money to assist 75 area families. Julia is currently working to train other kids to run similar events in 12 additional counties this coming summer.

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The Southeastern Oklahoma Chapter of the American Red Cross in McAlester nominated Julia for this honor. As one of Oklahoma's top two honorees Julia receives \$1,000, an engraved silver medallion, and an all-expense paid trip to Washington, D.C. this May where she and the other statewide honorees will be recognized for their work. During the recognition events The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards will select the top ten volunteers for 2004 for additional honors.

Two other young volunteers from Congressman Carson's district were also recognized as Distinguished Finalists for their community service. Savannah Gammon, 17, of Broken Bow, and Julie Hill, 17 of McAlester, will receive engraved bronze medallions for their extraordinary efforts on behalf of their communities. Savannah, a senior at Broken Bow High School founded a Key Club at her school and worked with the club to develop several community service projects including a literary education project. Julie, a senior at McAlester High School, helped to create the first Junior Master Gardner Club in Southeastern Oklahoma which works with third through fifth graders teaching them about gardening, nature and hard work.

"I am proud to see that the young people of my district are working to make their communities the best they can be," said Carson "Community service benefits everyone involved. I would like to congratulate the honorees for their exceptional service and encourage other young people to follow in their footsteps."